

DECLINE IN BASE RUNNING IS PRONOUNCED IN LEAGUES

Season of 1917 Shows Both American and National Leagues Are Short by Over 500 Steals as Compared With Records of 1916; Various Reasons Ascribed as Cause of Slump in the Number of Base Steals.

NEW YORK, Feb. 12.—Why the general decline in base running, which is becoming more and more pronounced in the two major leagues?

Numerous theories may be advanced to show why the American league total in steals for 1917 showed a decline of 434 steals in comparison with the 1916 figures, while the National league figures fell 446 steals below the 1916 mark. These particular seasons are picked out because they represent the high tides for a period when base running was one of the bright features of the game.

It may be that pitchers and catchers are doing the work better than in the games of a few years ago, the former making the runners hug the base and the catchers telling the base runners off with efforts by superb marksmanship. Then, again, it may be that the players now at the top in the profession carry no such speed as the players of six or seven years ago. Another theory may be that the sacrifice or the hit-and-run play has superseded the straightforward steal.

Whatever the reason for the decline, there can be no denying that it has set in. The base running marks for 1917 in the two major leagues are positively the worst in either organization over a stretch of eight consecutive years, or since 1910, inclusive. From 1911, when 1917 steals were recorded in the National league, there has been a steady decline, excepting a slight uptick in 1916 over the preceding campaign, until the latest season when only 1144 stolen bases were registered. In the American league the decline has been steady from 1912 to date, the figures dropping in each succeeding year. The total for 1917 was 1810; for 1917 it was 1774.

All Clubs The Same. Practically all clubs appear to be affected by this blight on base running, and it is even noticeable in the games of the individual players. Ty Cobb led the American league last season with a total of 15 steals, the lowest mark to carry off first honors since 1909. The leaders in the American league had averaged 40 steals a season for seven consecutive campaigns up to 1917. In the National league Max Carey led with 46 steals, the second lowest figure since 1902. The idea of the decline may be had from the fact that only two National league players pilfered more than 30 steals last season and one other reached that mark. In 1917 five of McGraw's champions passed the figure which gave Carey first honors last season. Shocker, Jackie Murray and Herzog all ranging between 45 and 53 steals, while Devore led with 61 Doyle, ranking sixth on his own team, stole 35 bases. No club in either league has since threatened the base running record of the 1911 Giants.

The Giants of 1911-12-13 averaged 320 stolen bases per season, and the 200 mark was being unusual for a club with several of them doing beyond 250 steals. In 1919 only two clubs of the 16 which make up the major leagues were able to reach the double century in steals, and the same conditions prevailed in 1917. When it is recalled that the National league leaders from 1912 averaged above 200 steals per year, the 162 steals by the Giants last season, the two figures for the year in the older league, shape up as very puny.

American Falling. The American league has been falling back the same way. In 1911 its teams rang up more than 200 steals, and in each of the next three campaigns five clubs went beyond the double century. In 1915 three clubs in Ben Johnson's circuit went beyond 250 steals and another reached 345. These figures furnish interesting comparison with the base running of the past season, when 223 was high mark and only two clubs went beyond 500 in stolen bases.

It was generally accepted theory six or seven seasons back that speed was absolutely essential to a pennant winner. This idea got a severe test in 1915 when the Boston Red Sox, the current season's champions, were defeated off one pennant, while the Phillies and the Braves, the two best teams in the National league, fought it out for the other. In 1917 the two pennant winners led their respective leagues in base running, but neither had any such total as did the leaders of a few seasons back.

Mr. Jack

1. "YOU ARE CRYING. PRAY TELL ME WHY?"



3. "THIS IS AN OUTRAGE! IF I COULD JUST LAY MY TWO HANDS ON HIM, I'D BUST HIS HEAD AN' BREAK HIM IN TWO AND MAKE HIM A PUZZLE FOR THE CORONER! ID—"



5. "WELL SHRIMP-FACE! WATCHER GOIN' TO DO?"



6. "ER—I GUESS I'LL CRY TOO!"



Warren Again Proves That He Is Unable To Make Allowances Even For His Wife.

"WELL, it's raining," said Helen. "When we went in, the stars were shining, Warren." "Well, it's a cinch they're not shining now," Warren growled. "It looks as though it had just begun, too. If you had come along when I wanted you to, we might have missed it altogether."

"Well, it wasn't my fault," Helen returned. "I couldn't be rude, when Mrs. Thurston insisted on my seeing her new gown."

"Oh, you women," Warren said between his teeth. "They were standing in the doorway of the apartment house they had left, uncertain as to just how to proceed. It was a distance of three blocks to the subway station, and the rain was coming down pretty fast."

"Helen hesitated. Warren was always blaming her for saving money on taxis when they were necessary. She wondered why he did not suggest a taxi now that they really needed it."

"Come on, what are you waiting for?" "I'll ruin my hat," Helen began. "Did you wear that straw hat after all?" queried Warren, frowning to her impatiently. "Well, if that wasn't a fool stunt. You know there isn't a chance of getting a taxi in this neighborhood. The idea of wearing straw hats in February?"

"You might go out and see if you can get a taxi, or see if the hallway will get one for us."

MINNIS MAY BOOST AVERAGE

Had Difficulty in Hitting Connie Mack's Mediocre Pitchers.

The transfer of "Stuffy" McInnis from the Athletics to the Boston Red Sox should enable McInnis to hit from 20 to 25 points higher next season than his average of the past three seasons.

McInnis is the only star batter in the American league who has been unable to fatten his average at the expense of the job pitching staff. Connie Mack has had since 1914.

It frequently has been a question how much McInnis would improve in hitting if he had a chance to bat against the Athletics pitchers instead of playing first base behind them. It is a certainty that had McInnis been able to bat against the Athletics pitchers in 1916 when he hit .325 he would have picked up the necessary five points to have kept his chain of 136 batting averages intact. The 1916 average is the only break in this chain.

Stars Playing for Red Cross Benefit

Los Angeles, Calif., Feb. 12.—Among the well known California tennis stars who are playing in the annual benefit of the Red Cross are Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Bundy, Miss Mary Henson, Miss Florence Nicholson, Mrs. B. O. Brown and Mrs. R. H. Williams. They recently participated in a tournament of this kind at Pasadena.

Fill Out With Pencil



First trace four, then fifty two. And you'll see what Piffle drew.

LEAGUE CLUBS BOASTING

Coming Stars in Baseball May Shine Unseen During the War Period.

New York, Feb. 12.—Another star to show which way the baseball wind is blowing is contained in the report that a considerable majority of the major league clubs are planning to stagger along without regular scouting systems this year. Only a few of the richer organizations will maintain their purchase divisions in fact; and even these will probably require their scoutboards to double up in some other capacity.

The increasing necessity for keeping expenses down to an absolute minimum is partly responsible for the contemplated suspension of the scouting industry for the duration of the war. Another very pertinent reason for turning loose the bush-busters in the probability that very little scouting will be possible this year.

As far as is known only five minor leagues are contemplating another season of wartime baseball. The Pacific Coast league, the Northwestern league, the Texas league, the American association and the Southern association are the only circuits of lower than major classification in which professional ball will be played.

City League to Begin Second Half

The beginning of the second round in the City Basketball league will bring together the Mines and High school at 8:15 on Friday evening and the Walls and Feldman companies at the same evening. Both games are going to be all that the fans will want to see. Much interest is centering around the Mines and High game, as the former are expected to stage a big combat.

Several hard practices on the part of both teams is getting all the players into fine feathers for this big match. The Walls outfit are anxiously awaiting this last opportunity to take a fall out of the Feldman five, who outclassed them in the last match, and with the improved Walls lineup there is every reason to believe that the Feldman boys are due for a trimming.

NOT ONLY BAT THAT BOOSTS BASEBALL

Besides having to pay more to see a ball game next season, the fan will have to pay more if he wants to play ball himself. In previous years a genuine big league baseball could be bought for \$1.50, but wool has increased about 200 percent and, according to a big manufacturer, the price of a big league baseball will rise to \$2.

EXTRA WEEK TO LINGER UP. Detroit battery men will report to Washington by March 10, or a full week earlier than the main squad reports. The exhibition season for the Tigers will begin March 22, Waack being the first team played.

A Narrative Of Everyday Affairs Their Married Life

Warren turned to her when they were seated. "If you take cold tonight it's your own fault," he said, eying her dripping shoulders. "Why didn't you wear your fur coat?" "I would have, but I never dreamed it would rain."

"I suppose your feet are wet through, too; the ridiculous shoes you women wear these days, with paper soles, wouldn't protect anything. Did you get your hat wet?" Helen shook her head; she felt too miserable to be found fault with any longer. Her shirtwaist was clinging to her wet arms underneath her coat, and she was very uncomfortable. The minute they reached the apartment Helen hurried to turn on a hot bath. She took cold easily, and was determined to avoid it if possible.

"If you women would only believe a little bit in the old fashioned theory about an ounce of prevention," growled Warren. "This couldn't have happened; but you modern women, who won't listen to a word of advice, let alone obey your husbands in anything—it serves you right if you do take cold! Package it with tea and a lemon."—Copyright, 1918, International News Service.

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Manicure Lady

She Goes To An Old Fashioned Party and Finds That People Change Very Little.

"I WAS to a old fashioned party last night," said the Manicure Lady. "I done my heart good to think that after all people ain't changed much since I was a little kid."

"They would naturally change some in all them years," said the tactful Head Barber.

"All what years?" rasped the Manicure Lady. "One would think to hear you talk, George, that the best part of a century had come and went since I was a little child in school. You would think you was talking to your old maid aunt. What's the idea?"

"I didn't mean so many years—I just meant that a year is a lot of days, you know," said the Head Barber. "And quite a lot can happen in a year."

"I got the notion you was trying to be fly," said the Manicure Lady. "But if you wasn't all right. That old miserable to be found fault with any longer. Her shirtwaist was clinging to her wet arms underneath her coat, and she was very uncomfortable. The minute they reached the apartment Helen hurried to turn on a hot bath. She took cold easily, and was determined to avoid it if possible."

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That Rookie from the 13th Squad

SUPREME MOMENTS IN A ROOKIE'S LIFE--CATCHING THAT LAST TRAIN BACK AFTER YOU HAD GIVEN UP ALL HOPE

Peck's foot the other morning. Atlas says a person's test get dumfounded when a cross-eyed fellow comes along driving a blind horse to a buggy with wobbly wheels.

Raz Barlow has written a letter and sent it off with a two-cent stamp on it, which will take it nearly there.

Jeff Potlock, who has always borne the reputation of being one of our conservative citizens, has had his house papered with newspapers containing nothing but censored war news.

Little Fidelity Flinders has been unable to find any bones on the way dog he received Christmas.

Luke Mathews has come to the conclusion that the north and the south are getting on too friendly terms to fight each other any more, so he is going ahead and dispose of the bill of Confederate money he has been saving for the occasion.

Miss Hostetter Hicks will sing at the Hog Ford church next fourth Sunday. A large number of people have decided that they cannot go on account of the fearful condition of the roads.

Luke Mathews visited the store at Bounding Billows Saturday and laid in a supply of 1918 almanacs, and is now busily engaged in peering into the mysterious future.

Jerome Plans For Greatness

Expect to Be the Greatest Mining Camp in World; Town Overcrowded.

By P. H. MILNES. Prescott, Ariz., Feb. 12.—Jerome's heart that it will be the largest and most permanent mining camp, not alone in the United States, but in the world, is believed in a fair way of fulfillment.

Following the subsidence of the boom, which came on the heels of the bringing in of the United Verde Extension, it was predicted by many that a sudden drop in population and excitement would be witnessed. But Jerome has progressed in the past year in such a marvelous manner that despite the erection of a modern hotel and many private homes and houses to rent, the camp is still overcrowded and it is almost impossible to get a place to sleep unless accommodations are reserved in advance.

The congestion will be partially but not wholly relieved in the near future by the construction of a 44-apartment building, or half a dozen structures containing eight apartments each by the United Verde Extension. The building is already drawn and in the hands of architect W. A. Clark in New York, and upon receipt of his approval will be started in the latter part of the month.

Jerome has added to her mineral laurels by the discovery of potassium. The essential elements of modern agriculture, industry, and what is more important at the present time, the waging of war. The one sample that has been secured runs 3.39 per cent potassium, or approximately \$112.50 a ton. Tom Smart, the owner of the claims located in the vicinity of Walnut Springs, about 24 miles west of Jerome, has asked the United States bureau of mines to send an expert to determine the extent of the deposit, which may be of incalculable benefit to the government.

C. M. Garrison, of New York, second vice-president of the Calumet and Jerome district, is in Prescott in connection with an offer made by a Gotham syndicate for an interest in the property. Terms have been fixed and a ready to close deal. If the deal goes through it will mean the more rapid development of the Calumet and Jerome district. "If it does not go through, we shall simply proceed with development along the lines we are now pursuing."

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Experts Check

Government Determining Effect of Increased or Decreased Copper Price.

Tucson, Ariz., Feb. 12.—Representatives of the government are now in the state of the Arizona copper industry, determining the effect of increased or decreased copper price.

Figures gathered in December indicated there would be loss of over 100,000,000 pounds from Arizona's annual production if the price should go below 25¢, and that over 150,000,000 pounds in the state would be affected.

The December data was gathered and sent to Washington by the Arizona chapter American mining congress and was not complete. The chapter is still negotiating with the world's copper districts which are increasing the total of metal that would be cut off by price reduction. More small shippers are shown as closing down each week, as well as decrease in output of those continuing to operate. Large operations as well as the small ones are reached by the decrease in supplies of the richer ores they have been obliged to mine in order to operate at profit.

We have every confidence in the property. Personally, I never felt more confident than I do right now after going through the new workings on the 600 foot level."

Two Years Progress. The West United Verde, formerly the Jerome Victor Extension, is unwavering down to the 1000 foot level. The new workings will find the shaft dry down to the 1700 foot station, but it will be some time before the extension working on the 1000 foot level is completed. It is soon as the unwavering process is completed the shaft will be sunk to 2000 feet where drifting and cross-cutting will begin.

Porphyry Contact Out. The latest contact porphyry contact has been cut at the Verde Combination. Instead of being 210 feet north of the shaft on the 600 level, as it is at the tunnel level, it is now 150 feet away. But it trends from northeast to southwest, like all the other faults in the Jerome district. Between the schist and porphyry there is two feet of white quartz carrying a little chalcopyrite.

and Birdie here ain't going to squawk any more until after we have peace again. It'll be time enough then to straighten out our little troubles. "I don't go to no parties no more," said the squire George. "Life has become with me a matter of getting by."

HOGWALLOW NEWS

DUNK ROTTS, REGULAR CORRESPONDENT. Copyrighted—E. L. Adams. (George Bingham.)

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